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ABSTRACT

The report combines survey findings and data from interviews and focus-group sessions on recruiting minority group members for the private college or university governing board. It discusses real and perceived obstacles and recommends resources to assist institutions. Recommendations are based on two premises: (1) more minorities are needed on boards of trustees to help independent colleges and university leaders prepare their campuses for increasingly diverse student populations, and (2) more minorities have progressed to a level at which they can exercise the responsibilities of volunteer trusteeship and philanthropy. An introductory chapter outlines the case for greater inclusiveness on governing boards, and the second chapter examines the critical first step--the institution's commitment to greater diversity. The third chapter discusses identifying, cultivating, and recruiting minority trustees, and the fourth chapter discusses creating a climate that will enhance board diversity. Appended materials include data on recent and anticipated increases in minority populations in the United States, the racial and ethnic distribution of faculty and instructional staff as of 1991, and the ethnic/racial board composition of independent college and universities in 1991, and a sample board profile worksheet. (Contains 17 references.) (MSE)

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Recruiting Minority Trustees

To Independent College and University Governing Boards

HE 030 571

BY J. EUGENE GRIGSBY, III
AND SYLVIA W. GALLOWAY

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To Independent College and University Governing Boards

J. Eugene Grigsby, III
Sylvia W. Galloway

Association of Governing Boards
of Universities and Colleges
Washington, D.C.
1996

ABOUT AGB

The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) advances the practice of citizen trusteeship, a distinguishing characteristic of American higher education for more than 350 years. AGB's membership comprises 1,100 boards that govern 1,700 campuses in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, Europe, and Pacific Trust Territories. It includes every type of higher education institution in the public and private sectors, state coordinating boards, specialized schools, boards of college and university foundations, and independent K-12 schools. More than 30,000 trustees, presidents, and chancellors are members of AGB.

This publication is intended to inform debate, discussion, and action, not to represent or imply endorsement by the association or its members.

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FOREWORD

Since the mid-1980s, the racial and ethnic makeup of governing boards has remained relatively static. This slow pace of change, especially in independent colleges and universities, has not matched rapid changes in the student bodies of our institutions or the larger society. By the turn of the millennium, more than 36 percent of all school-age students will be Hispanic American, African American, Asian American, or Native American. The characteristics and composition of governing boards are not inconsequential to these demographic shifts. Indeed, the makeup of these boards is a significant bellwether of how well minorities are making headway in society. Volunteer service on governing boards is one of the most prestigious symbols of personal success and achievement.

The sparse numbers of minority group members on independent sector boards prompted AGB to focus on the issues institutions confronting recruiting minority trustees. Eugene Grigsby, an AGB director and a trustee of Occidental College, and Sylvia Galloway, AGB's director of private sector programs and a trustee at Olivet College, were asked to explore these concerns because of their extensive involvement with nonprofit boards, minority concerns, and higher education policy development. Although the authors readily admit they have no magic formulas to solve these dilemmas, they offer practical advice and wisdom.

This special report combines data from survey findings, one-on-one interviews, and focus-group sessions. The authors discuss real and perceived obstacles and recommend resources to assist independent institutions in recruiting more minority trustees. Their recommendations hinge on two critical premises: (1) More minorities are needed on boards of trustees to help independent colleges and university leaders prepare their campuses for increasingly diverse student bodies, and (2) many more minorities have made it to the top and are available to exercise the responsibilities of volunteer trusteeship and philanthropy.

AGB is pleased to publish this important contribution to the writing and thinking about the composition and characteristics of academic governing boards in today's society. A generous grant from the BankAmerica Foundation made this publication possible.

Richard T. Ingram
AGB President
Washington, D.C.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

J. Eugene Grigsby, III has served as a member of AGB's board of directors since 1990. He has been president of The Planning Group in Los Angeles since 1972. He also is director of the advanced policy institute at the UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Science Research and former director of UCLA's Center for African American Studies. He is a frequent contributor of articles to various periodicals and professional journals. His most recent books are *Shaping A National Urban Agenda* and *Residential Apartheid*. Grigsby serves as a director for numerous nonprofit organizations, including the 1010 Development Corporation, House of Blues Foundation, Mega-Cities Coordinators Council, and Operation Hope, Inc. He is a member of the Occidental College Board of Trustees in Los Angeles.

Sylvia W. Galloway is director of private sector programs for AGB, where she is responsible for program development, coordination, and evaluation of national, regional, and invitational seminars for trustees, presidents, and senior academic administrators. She also has worked for the American Council on Education as consultant to the Office of Minority Concerns, program director for the Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials, and senior program associate for the Center for Leadership Development in Higher Education. She has worked with numerous boards in the nonprofit sector. Currently, Galloway is vice president of the board of directors of the Washington Hearing and Speech Society in Washington, D.C. She is a member of the Olivet College Board of Trustees in Olivet, Michigan.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The thoughts of many people have influenced this special report. We'd especially like to thank the following trustees, presidents, and administrators who took the time from busy schedules to spend time at AGB, sharing their ideas and concerns about achieving greater diversity among boards of trustees at independent colleges and universities: Lucy Ann Geiselman, Tom Ingram, David Jones, Alan Kirschner, Barbara Taylor, Joseph McGowan, and Oscar Remick.

We'd also like to acknowledge Beverly Dalton, Sr. Karen Kennelly, Jayne Lipe, Ricardo Martinez, Donna Shavlik, John Slaughter, Roosevelt Thomas, Gwen Weaver, and Reginald Wilson, whose advice via mail and telephone was invaluable.

Additionally, we owe thanks to the presidents of 70 independent institutions who responded to a 1994 informal survey on ethnic and racial board composition. Their candid responses assisted us in expressing the realities associated with the recruitment and retention of racially and ethnically diverse trustees.

Ideas presented and questions raised throughout this report reflect the authors' interpretation, understanding, and appreciation of these many viewpoints. We hope we have done justice to those views in our effort to contribute to the ongoing diversity dialogue.

Finally, we would like to thank the BankAmerica Foundation for supporting this project.

INTRODUCTION

This AGB Special Report examines how boards of trustees of independent colleges and universities can enhance their abilities to recruit and select qualified trustees from racial and ethnic minority groups. Board chairs, members of board nominating committees, committees on trustees, and college and university presidents are the primary audiences.

The report assumes that boards are genuinely interested in increasing their number of ethnic and minority members because they recognize the institutional and societal value of inclusiveness. Minority trustees bring insights and advice that are enormously helpful to their institution's ability to attract a diverse array of students, faculty, and staff. They can help colleges and universities become successful multicultural communities that are models for the larger society and that serve as a bridge between the campus and the community. Experience has shown, however, that even when boards want to diversify, the task is not an easy one.

This report also assumes that minority trustees have the same obligations and expectations as majority (white) trustees—including the expectation to give annual gifts according to their means and to raise money for the institution.

Finally, this report examines a number of factors, some grounded in fact and others in misperceptions, that are thought to impede the best efforts of boards to achieve ethnic and racial diversity. Despite these obstacles, some boards of independent colleges and universities have broadened the composition of their membership. This report describes successful approaches boards have used to achieve greater diversity.

To assist in compiling this report, AGB conducted a survey among member institutions and convened a focus-group session with current trustees and college presidents. Group members reviewed and commented on the results of the AGB survey, identified the most common barriers to board diversification, and presented workable solutions that enable boards to become more diverse. The report's authors also cochaired a session at the 1995 AGB National Conference on Trusteeship on ways to increase diversity among boards of trustees. Many ideas contained in this report were discussed at that meeting.

This report contains five chapters. Chapter 1 proposes that increasing board diversity helps independent colleges and universities become better players in a rapidly changing society and the global marketplace. Chapter 2 examines the board's role in fulfilling its institution's mission to achieve more inclusiveness. Strategies for identifying, cultivating, and recruiting minority trustees are the focus of Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, the

report explores board development and describes the crucial roles the president and board chair play in creating the necessary environment for board diversity. Chapter 5 concludes with reminders of the primary roles and responsibilities of all trustees.

Issues of gender, religion, geographic region, and special-interest groups are beyond the scope of this report. Similarly, the report deals only with independent colleges and universities, whose recruitment and selection procedures differ significantly from those of public institutions. Suggested strategies and techniques for increasing board diversity in the public sector would likely not be very meaningful for independent colleges and universities.

CHAPTER 1

The Case for Greater Inclusiveness

SPECIAL REPORT

Race: Many contend that this issue is as significant and volatile in American society today as at any time in the nation's history. While few would disagree that race has played a significant role in impeding the academic and economic progress of ethnic minorities, Americans have reached no consensus on how to eliminate the race dilemma once and for all. This disagreement is nowhere more evident than in the mounting debate over whether colleges and universities should be allowed to use affirmative-action programs as a way to offer ethnic minorities—especially African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans—access to higher education.

Critics contend that colleges and universities that use affirmative-action programs to increase the number of ethnic minorities on their campuses are giving special preferences that discriminate against better qualified students who are not members of an ethnic minority group. Proponents of affirmative action, however, argue that in spite of the growing pool of eligible ethnic minority students, persistent discriminatory practices have resulted in far fewer ethnic minority enrollments than would be expected if the playing field were, in fact, level. Indeed, proponents point out that if some form of affirmative action were not in place, the current small proportion of ethnic minorities in higher education would dwindle—particularly in the case of African Americans and Hispanics.

Boards of trustees have not escaped this affirmative-action conundrum. As the governing bodies for colleges and universities, boards create or change policies that respond to the challenge of racial and ethnic diversity. Boards not only make policy; they also embody the institution's mission. Through their actions (or inaction), trustees project an institution's values, ethics, and leadership style and help create a certain environment on campus. They determine the type of educational community they want for their institution.

After the racial turmoil the nation experienced during the late 1960s and early 1970s, many boards of trustees were persuaded that diversifying student enrollment was the right thing to do. As more and more campuses increased their ethnic minority enrollments, administrators soon realized that simply diversifying the student population would not be sufficient. Thus, during the 1980s, the nation's colleges and universities made concerted efforts to diversify staff and faculty as well. It was perhaps inevitable that boards of trustees ultimately would have to respond to calls for their own diversification.

The need for more inclusiveness is as much a practical as a moral and philosophical issue. This nation's capacity to function in a much more racially and ethnically mixed society and in an increasingly global marketplace hinges on higher education's ability to produce and engage more and better educated minority leaders. Because our campuses increasingly serve as instruments of social progress, where tolerance and understanding are sometimes fitfully but often successfully achieved, we should not be surprised to see the eyes of constituents turn to our boardrooms and the composition of our boards.

Emergent minority populations are causing us to rethink and broaden the cultural norms that constitute the American way of life. We are starting to appreciate different approaches to the formulation and expression of ideas as we gain greater exposure to various cultural heritages. All sectors—business and industry; federal, state, and local governments; and religious and civic associations—are affected by the changing demographic scene. Demographers predict minorities will comprise more than 40 percent of the national population after the turn of the century. By the year 2020, the total U.S. population of about 265 million will include approximately 47 million Hispanics, 44 million African Americans, 14 million Asian Americans, and 3 million Native Americans, according to Harold Hodgkinson's 1992 study, *A Demographic Look at Tomorrow*.

Today, the composition of boards of trustees of independent colleges and universities in no way reflects this demographic trend. In public higher education, boards of trustees and regents are much more diverse in their

composition; their relative "tax supported" status tends to encourage this continuing diversity. Independent colleges and universities, on the other hand, are not legally *required* to have governing boards that are "broadly reflective of society's racial and ethnic composition," notes Richard T. Ingram in *Effective Trusteeship: A Guide for Board Members of Independent Colleges and Universities*.

AGB has collected more than two decades' worth of data on the ethnic and racial participation on trustee boards—data that show concretely how few minority members serve on those governing bodies. From 1969-85, the data show that participation of ethnic minorities on independent college and university boards was practically nonexistent. In 1985, African Americans comprised about 6 percent of all board members; the participation rate of other ethnic minorities was virtually nil. Since 1991, the percentage of African Americans on independent college and university boards still is only a little more than 6 percent; Asian Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans each have participation rates of about 1 percent, according to the AGB data.

Yet tomorrow's work force will be composed of today's increasingly ethnically and racially diverse college and university students. Many are likely to be alumni of independent colleges and universities, who of course, are potential donors. Boards of trustees must be able to reach out to these individuals in ways different than before. They must gain a deeper understanding of what diversity really means and have the desire to achieve it.

Every academic institution should define what constitutes a diverse, balanced board of trustees *given its mission and purpose*; each should actively and persistently recruit talent from among the varied groups that constitute this nation's lifeblood, and increasingly, the key to its future. To increase board diversity, boards first must examine their own commitment to diversify. Chapter Two suggests ways independent college and university boards can strengthen their total institutional commitments.

CHAPTER 2

The First Step: Institutional Commitment

SPECIAL REPORT

What is needed above all from the individual trustee is commitment—commitment to the institution and commitment to the structure of higher education in America.

—John Nason
Former President,
Swarthmore College and Carleton College

Boards must demonstrate their institution's total commitment to the goal of achieving racial and ethnic diversity. That process, which may entail a careful reexamination of some of the very ideals on which the institution was founded, requires several steps:

- establishing institutional credibility;
- adapting institutional mission;
- developing appropriate policies and procedures;
- diversifying the board; and
- reinforcing the role of the president.

Establishing Credibility. The governing board functions, in word and deed, as the guardian of the institution's values. Its members may need to examine closely the institution's values to determine whether they promote and celebrate ethnic and racial diversity. The board's motivation to

ensure its own membership becomes more diverse must complement incentives used to encourage ethnic and racial diversity elsewhere on campus. In some cases, the board, with the president, faculty, and students, may need to serve as the architect of institutional change. The entire board, with the help of minority members, must be sensitive to minority issues and be willing to work with the president to shape policies and procedures that support the institution's existing or evolving mission. The board must give sober and honest consideration to institutional traditions and their relevancy to the institution's current climate and composition. Board members must be willing to grapple with such questions as the following:

- Does a commitment to greater access and diversity fit the institution's mission?
- Should the board establish specific goals and timetables for minority faculty, staff, and student enrollment?
- What can the board do to encourage special legislative appropriations or private gifts to support minority recruitment and retention efforts?

To support its mission, the board may need to develop different policies and procedures that address ethnic and racial diversity and periodically review, change, reaffirm, and even adapt the institutional mission.

Adapting Institutional Mission. The mission statements of most independent colleges and universities are steeped in institutional history, tradition, and culture. In most cases, they were adopted long before many of today's trustees began their service on the board.

Over the past three decades, the climate on most campuses has changed dramatically. The student body is more ethnically and racially diverse; students are older; more are women; and more are part-time students. These differences have affected institutional tradition and culture, producing changes in the way students and faculty interact, and shifts in views about authority and responsibility. Such differences are requiring institutions to examine original missions and think innovatively about how to achieve a "sense of community." For some institutions, this will be a challenging and arduous task.

At a recent AGB meeting on board diversity, a president from a small, independent, liberal arts college remarked, "The biggest challenge we face [in higher education] is not to preserve an old community but to form a new one." Adapting the academic environment to encompass the cultural differences and backgrounds of students, faculty, and administrators who are ethnically and racially diverse is part of this challenge.

Numerous independent colleges and universities have instituted poli-

cies and procedures that articulate a commitment to ethnic and racial diversity. They have developed cooperative programs between the institution and the local community to encourage school-age youth to attend college; established programs to increase the participation and achievement of minority students; funded initiatives to improve minority student and faculty participation; designed personnel policies, practices, and grievance procedures to ensure fair and equitable treatment of minorities; and devised means to assess their progress in enhancing institutional diversity. Informed commitment is a crucial part of this process.

Making the Board More Inclusive. Changing the composition of the board is a crucial component of demonstrating genuine commitment to inclusiveness. An ethnically and racially diverse board brings symbolic weight to the institution's efforts to reach out to a more diverse community. Yet a board's diversification is more than symbolic; it is key to both the institution's credibility and the board's responsibility to serve the broad public trust. It also is true that the presence of minorities on a board does not necessarily ensure that the board will govern effectively. Regardless, the board must clearly state the reasons it is promoting ethnic and racial diversity on the campus and among its own members.

The board must be able to grapple with questions such as these:

- What do we mean by "diversity" at this institution? Do we have realistic goals?
- What kind of institutional culture or system is needed to make diversity happen on campus? Can the new system or culture be applied to the wider community or the workplace?
- How can the thinking and actions of the board help the institution and the wider community manage diversity?

Recognizing the President's Pivotal Role. The president sets the tone and devises the strategy by which the board commits itself to achieving diversity and other institutional values. One trustee from a prominent independent liberal arts college commented on the importance of presidential leadership: "If the president isn't interested, the board usually won't bring it up on its own. The president calls the shots. A reluctant president often leads to pushing and shoving."

At one level, the president can describe to the board changes in the racial and ethnic mix among students, faculty, and staff and explain what changes, if any, have been made in admissions criteria, curricular requirements, or campus climate. The president also should discuss with the board how its own characteristics are symbolically linked to the racial and ethnic

characteristics of the institution. In helping the board define the appropriate context in which to operate, the president can engage the board in conversations about institutional tradition and culture and discuss why an appreciation and understanding of diversity are essential as the institution expands its vision.

The next chapter presents strategies that many independent institutions have employed to overcome obstacles that often block progress in achieving a balanced board membership. Some of these obstacles are real, but more are imagined or greatly exaggerated.

CHAPTER 3

Identifying, Cultivating, and Recruiting Minority Trustees

SPECIAL REPORT

Only the most able, influential board leaders can identify, cultivate, and enlist the kind of people needed to guide a college or university into the next century.

—Robert L. Gale
AGB President Emeritus

Independent institutions responding to the AGB survey cited a number of obstacles—both perceived and real—in recruiting minority trustees. Among the barriers they cited: There are too few minority candidates; many minority candidates are overcommitted; and minority candidates allegedly lack the financial resources required for trusteeship.

Yet as the survey also makes abundantly clear, many colleges and universities have successfully overcome these obstacles and increased the diversity of their boards. They rely on the active commitment of the president, the nominating committee, and influential trustees and administrators; they secure nominations from alumni; they seek out successful minority graduates; and they ask for help from local clubs, businesses, and religious institutions.

By and large, the boards of independent colleges and universities are self-perpetuating. For most institutions, the nominating committee (commonly called the committee on trustees) takes the lead in identifying, cul-

tivating, and recruiting new trustees. The president, however, has significant influence: More than 90 percent of presidents of such institutions help identify new trustees, according to *The Guardians: Boards of Trustees of American Colleges and Universities*, by Clark Kerr and Marian L. Gade.

Not surprisingly, these methods of trustee cultivation and identification have meant that governing boards have been predominantly composed of white males, although the number of female board members has increased steadily since 1969. Today, women comprise about 23 percent of the membership of independent college and university boards. The participation of minority trustees on these boards began to be noticeable—though barely—by about 1977. At that time, 1 percent of board members were from ethnic or racial groups other than African American, and about 5 percent of board members were African American.

Although independent colleges and universities are showing steady progress in selecting minority trustees, there are difficulties surrounding the recruitment process. Today, the percentages of African Americans (6 percent), Hispanics (1 percent), Asian Americans (1 percent), and Native Americans (1 percent) serving on independent college and university boards still are very low. What obstacles have made progress so difficult?

Major Obstacles in Recruiting Minority Trustees. Independent institutions responding to AGB's informal 1994 survey cited three general areas—lack of money, lack of priority, and lack of supply—as the most frequent obstacles preventing boards from becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. Table 1 below provides additional details.

Major Obstacles to Recruiting Minority Trustees

Major Obstacles	Percent citing as obstacle
Low number of minority graduates, alumni	34
Minority nominees are overextended and do not have time to serve	18
Lack of institutional priority	11
Geographic isolation	10
Need for board members with financial resources, lack of wealth	10
Finding qualified minorities who feel comfortable with the mission of the university	6
Difficulty in figuring out how to select from the "second level of prominence"	3
Lack of familiarity with minorities	2
Fear of refusal	2
Lack of board turnover	2
Failure to develop long term relations with the minority community	2

Source: AGB Survey of 150 member institutions, June 1994. (Response rate of 46%)

Let's examine how real these obstacles are.

1. Lack of money. Some independent institutions believe that minority trustees do not have access to money—a perception belied by net=worth data on black-owned businesses. For example, a recent Commerce Department Census Bureau report, *Black-Owned Businesses*, reveals that 10 percent of black-owned firms that had 100 or more paid employees accounted for $6 billion in receipts. According to the report, the number of black-owned businesses increased 46 percent between 1987 and 1992.

These figures suggest that many African Americans who might be recruited are likely to have adequate personal financial resources or access to those resources. It is important to note, moreover, that personal giving is only one part of an institution's larger fund-raising and development plan, which usually includes a wide array of individual, government, foundation, and corporate sources. It is the trustees' responsibility to see that the institution receives support not only by providing individual gifts but also by raising the consciousness of business and community leaders. Unfortunately, the misperception that trusteeship requires inordinate largess has curbed the interest of many minorities who otherwise might willingly agree to trusteeship.

One trustee who responded to the AGB survey observed: "Often, it's the apprehension over money and time commitment that make minority candidates unattracted to the idea of service on a not-for-profit board."

Trustees of several institutions commented on the misperceptions about the need for personal wealth. These trustees talked about the importance of looking at the varied contributions trustees bring to board service, including access to wealth through personal and professional contacts.

In *Fund-Raising Leadership: A Guide for College and University Boards*, J.W. Pocock offers the most cogent appraisal of the debate over trusteeship and money: "Perhaps the greatest responsibility of the governing board is to assure itself that all of the pieces are indeed in place, so that the board's own giving and personal participation become the fuse that lights a successful program to build the future of the institution."

2. Lack of priority. Respondents from a few institutions said their board's reluctance to make board diversity a high priority was an obstacle to recruiting minority trustees. This response can be interpreted in several ways. For example, the response could denote that the institution is inattentive to demographic changes and the impact of these changes on the ethnic and racial composition of the student body. Institutions seeking to recruit students from a national pool will be affected by these changes even when their campuses are located in racially homogenous areas. Al-

though there is no direct correlation between board and student body composition, ethnically and racially diverse boards can help their institutions design strategies to attract more minority students, faculty and staff.

3. Lack of supply. By far, most boards of independent institutions feel hindered by what they perceive as a low supply of minority trustees—be they alumni or minorities in the wider community—from which to choose. During an AGB workshop on building board diversity in the independent sector, one trustee summed up the situation this way: "There are simply too many institutions chasing too few minorities for board positions."

It may be, however, that nominating committees, presidents, and the board itself lack exposure to organizations and individuals who can steer them toward capable minority trustee candidates. All too often, minority "superstars" are the only known or sought-after candidates.

A college president observed: "When it comes to selecting first-level minorities, they [boards of trustees] take a stab—pursue someone who's actually overcommitted and says No. So, then they [boards of trustees] can say, 'We tried.'"

Another "supply" issue is the belief that new trustees should have some prior connection to the institution. Some institutions report that a trustee's connectedness to the institution's mission or tradition is the most important variable in trustee selection. A church-related institution, for example, said the religious affiliation of its trustees outweighed consideration of ethnic or racial characteristics.

Table 2 below indicates the importance of prior institutional affiliation in the selection of minority trustees.

Importance of Prior Institutional Affiliation in the Selection of Minority Trustees

Not important	**28%**
Somewhat important	**47%**
Very important	**19%**
No response	**6%**

Source: AGB Survey of 150 member institutions, June 1994. (Response rate of 46%.)

That two-thirds of the responding institutions said institutional affiliation was "somewhat important" or "very important" in the selection of minority trustees makes clear the distinctive nature of board service in independent higher education. This finding underscores the need for long-term institutional strategies to recruit, retain, and graduate more minority students who later may be candidates for board service.

But experience also suggests that trustees, white or minority, need

not always have a prior connection with the institution—or at least not an intimate connection. Some of our most effective trustees are women and men who have neither graduated from nor had children who graduated from the colleges or universities they serve. Many trustees nationwide "adopt" schools because they become excited about their work and find great personal satisfaction in their trusteeship.

To find minority trustees with the willingness and ability to serve, boards must reach beyond the "superstar" level. Asking the chief executives of local companies to identify executives who seem to be on the "fast track" may be one approach. Inviting high-profile minority educators with distinguished teaching and research records from other (noncompeting) institutions is another avenue. Table 3 below presents strategies that trustees believe to be successful.

Strategies Used to Identify, Cultivate, and Recruit Minority Trustees

Strategies	Percent of Responses
Nominating committee and/or sitting trustees or campus administrators	44
Working with parents, local and business associations, clubs, business organizations, and churches	11
Focusing on minority graduates who have become successful	9
Nominations from alumni	9
Recruitment by president	7
Involving minority graduates in activities to interest them in board service	4
Attracting a diverse student population who will become alumni and eligible for board membership	3
Screening business and other publications	3
Using consultants and search experts	3
Establishing a board of advisors and ad hoc committees to which potential board members are appointed	3
Improving institutional visibility and profile	1
Ensuring diversity among faculty, administration, and staff	2
Revising board by-laws to require term limits	1

Source: AGB Survey of 150 member institutions, June 1994 (Response rate of 46 %).

Short-Term and Long-Term Strategies for Recruiting Minorities. Short-term and long-term strategies will help a nominating committee ensure a balanced and inclusive board membership. The nominating committee or committee on trustees is the board's instrument for shaping board composition. Since board composition ultimately directly affects board performance, the board's most influential members should be assigned to the nominating committee. That committee also may be used to orient new board members and to review the performance of individual trustees and the full board. When boards successfully meet their responsibilities, they help ensure their effective performance and bring cohesion among their members.

As previously noted, AGB's survey found that some institutions are aware of the need for trustees to have some attachment to the institution. One strategy to help build institutional attachment is to establish a board of advisers or an ad-hoc committee to which potential board members are appointed. These committees will help acclimate potential board members to the institution and provide mechanisms to tap minorities who may be prospective trustees.

Reviewing business and other publications and or using consultants and search experts are strategies that can be used immediately to identify minority talent and leadership. Institutions have found the following publications useful: *Black Enterprise*, *Hispanic*, *Hispanic Business*, *Minorities and Women in Business*, *Minority Business Entrepreneur*, *Who's Who Among Asian Americans*, *Who's Who Among Black Americans*, and *Who's Who Among Hispanic Americans*.

A growing number of resource guides also are designed to assist institutions and organizations in locating people of color who may be considered potential trustees. These resources include the following:

Asian and Hispanic Philanthropy, University of San Francisco, 1992

Donors of Color, Council on Foundations, 1993

National Women of Color Organizations, Ford Foundation, 1991

New England Directory of Black, Hispanic and Native American Doctoral Students, The New England Board of Higher Education, 1991

The Linkages Training Guide: Building Effective Multicultural Boards, United Way of New York City, 1994

The Value of Difference: Enhancing Philanthropy Through Inclusiveness in Governance, Staffing & Grantmaking, Council on Foundations, 1993

The use of publications or resource guides to identify prospective trustees does not, of course, guarantee that these candidates will identify themselves enthusiastically with your college or university. Such trustees, minority and nonminority, will have to be cultivated and brought into the

institution's culture. One trustee from an independent liberal arts college observed: "At our institution, we went after some 'superstars,' one black, one white. Neither got engaged in the mission of the college, and both were ultimately asked to leave the board. They weren't alumni. They felt no connection."

Identifying and recruiting minority trustees is an important short-term strategy, but in the long term, it is necessary to implement consistent strategies that involve minority graduates in alumni activities and subsequent board service, attract a more diverse student population, and improve the institution's perception as a hospitable environment for minority students. These long-term strategies ultimately will determine an institution's success in minority trustee appointment.

The next chapter discusses the role of board development and education in achieving greater racial and ethnic diversity through the nominating committee.

CHAPTER 4

Creating a Climate to Enhance Board Diversity

SPECIAL REPORT

Board development has both formal and informal aspects; that is, it includes specific activities aimed at enhancing board performance and it also emanates naturally from a board operating style that encourages openness to innovation, tolerance for diverse opinions, and an emphasis on trustee learning.

—Barbara E. Taylor
Former AGB Vice President
for Programs and Research

The board chair and president have critical roles if the board is to be successful in broadening its membership. Their joint leadership involves the following:

- helping the institution define what the board means by "diversity" within its own membership and within the institution;
- building a culture of tolerance for divergent opinions on issues;
- avoiding factions within the board;
- creating shared goals; and
- ensuring educational opportunities to build camaraderie within the board in pursuit of institutional priorities.

Fostering the Proper Environment. Because the nominating committee has the major responsibility for determining the board's composition, its members should explore the various dimensions of diversity. In addition to race and ethnicity, these include age, gender, geography, skills, and occupations. The committee should examine these traits and characteristics, which it may discern by carefully reviewing the backgrounds and experiences of potential board members and getting to know candidates in formal and informal settings.

Nominating committees that perform their tasks well help develop boards that can approach issues from a variety of perspectives and experiences. Diverse perspectives can help strengthen board decisions about institutional mission, academic or institutional restructuring, fund-raising, and many other issues. The more diverse the perspectives and experiences among trustees, the richer their contributions are likely to be.

At the same time, more diverse perspectives bring greater potential for disagreement and conflict, especially when boards discuss the often emotionally charged issues related to race and ethnicity. Fortunately, though, racial and ethnic diversity on the board has as much potential for finding creative solutions to such issues as it does for creating conflict within the board.

Board diversity is not an end in itself. All trustees must understand the history of the institution, share a commitment to fostering its growth, and strive to develop and maintain a cohesive board. No board member should be a "single issue" trustee or a "representative" of a special-interest group. Each trustee has a sacred duty to exercise independent judgment and to serve the best interests of the college or university as a whole. Bringing useful perspectives and insights to issues beyond one's experience is one thing; being seen as a board member with a private agenda is quite another.

All trustees are equals among equals and must be accorded fair treatment. One minority trustee remarked that he never received the names of potential donors when the board began its annual giving campaign. He believed that the board assumed he would not be interested in actively participating in the campaign because he would not know potential donors capable of making large gifts.

Another minority trustee, serving on the board of a small, predominantly white seminary in the Northeast, expressed a growing sense of animosity and frustration toward other board members and the president. This trustee, in the third year of a five-year term, complained that he was excluded from discussions about racial incidents that had occurred on campus. Because he was a member of a minority group, he felt the board should

have sought his advice on how to address those racial incidents. The president and the board chair, on the other hand, apparently were fearful of stereotyping this trustee by involving him in these matters. In their view, they acted as they did to "protect" him.

At another college, one minority trustee did not serve on any board committees. When, out of frustration, he raised questions about the recruitment of more minority faculty, he was cautioned not to interfere with hiring and other administrative aspects of the college.

These examples raise interesting questions for an ethnically and racially diverse board of trustees:

- Do misperceptions or stereotypes of minorities adversely affect their functioning in the same way as other board members? How?
- How can committee work help strengthen relationships between minority and other trustees?
- What special board events or campus activities can be used to build board cohesiveness?

Social scientists Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Taylor Cox, and Roosevelt Thomas have explored the effectiveness of minority group members in groups or organizations where they are minimally represented. They have found that token representation of minorities in groups makes many people feel uncomfortable, can strengthen discriminatory attitudes, and can adversely affect the group's performance.

Creating Effective Boards. These findings point to the need for continuous training to help the board function as a unified body that keeps the best interests of the institution central to its purposes—and not as an aggregate of special interests.

Leadership from both the president and the board chair is essential. They must take the lead in building board relationships that take into account the differences in attitudes among people of different ages, sexes, and races. They must be prepared to deal with factions that might arise within the board. And they must help board members achieve a camaraderie that lets them express differences of opinion while maintaining trust and confidence in one another that each person wants to do what is best for the institution.

The board chair and the president can take the lead in organizing formal or informal activities, such as board retreats, that help build trust and understanding among board members. Making certain that all trustees receive key committee appointments is another way to achieve a spirit of unity. At one independent institution, the president and board chair insist that all board members periodically rotate among different commit-

tees. Thus, minority board members may serve on and chair the finance, endowment, and development committees at some point in their tenure.

In *The Effective Board of Trustees*, Richard P. Chait, Thomas P. Holland, and Barbara E. Taylor surveyed more than 100 boards of independent colleges and universities to learn which traits can be ascribed to boards that function well. They summarized their work into six skill sets. Effective boards:

- consider institutional norms and culture,
- make certain that all trustees understand the institution and the way their roles and responsibilities relate to the institution,
- foster unity and a "sense of cohesiveness,"
- are able to grapple with the nuances of complex problems,
- recognize the need to develop and maintain good relationships with key constituencies, and
- help the institution stay in a strategic posture that ensures its future.

Boards that reap the greatest benefits from their racial and ethnic diversity have an intuitive tolerance for individual differences in behavior and style. This environment of openness permits candid, healthy, and constructive discourse among all board members. It produces a sense of shared responsibility and commitment that will help the board arrive at policies and decisions that are in the best interests of the institution as a whole. Institutions interested in bringing greater ethnic and racial diversity to their boards cannot overlook these principles of effective governance.

CHAPTER 5

Concluding Thoughts

SPECIAL REPORT

This report addresses ways to achieve greater ethnic and racial diversity in the boardrooms of independent colleges and universities. We believe that most presidents and trustees are earnestly employing a variety of tactics and strategies to make their boards more inclusive and that there are no easy answers to how a given college or university can best achieve racial and ethnic diversity. Institutional cultures differ greatly, and missions vary considerably. The focus of this report is not on prescriptions, but on the questions boards and their leaders should ask themselves.

Three sets of strategic questions are appropriate. The first set is largely for information-gathering purposes:

- How diverse is your board?
- Is your board's composition what it should be, given its aspirations for future student body composition, mission, and public purpose?
- Is a strategy in place to fill ethnic and racial gaps on the board?
- Are the board and its leaders truly committed to achieving a more balanced board membership?

Such questions place important issues on the board's agenda and will help the board resolve underlying issues of commitment and strategy.

The second set of questions addresses why an ethnically and racially

diverse board is important:

- To what extent does the racial or ethnic composition of the board reflect the composition of the student body, faculty, and administrators? How about in the future?
- Do plans for board member recruitment take into account projected institutional changes in ethnic and racial make-up?
- Is the composition of the board seen as a model for the rest of the institution?

The third set of questions focuses on the effectiveness of the board as a corporate unit:

- Given the board's current composition, is it functioning as well as it should?
- How can the composition and structure of board committees enhance board performance?
- Do all board members periodically rotate in committee assignment? Are all trustees given the opportunity to be considered for committee chair positions based upon their talents and experience?
- Are all board members given an opportunity to express their views and exchange ideas with the president and board chair both in board meetings and privately, when appropriate?

We close with two final questions: Does your board's membership reflect who and what you are as an academic institution in the service of this nation? If not, what should and can you do to make it so?

We wish you and your colleagues well in your quest for a balanced and effective board of trustees.

APPENDIX A

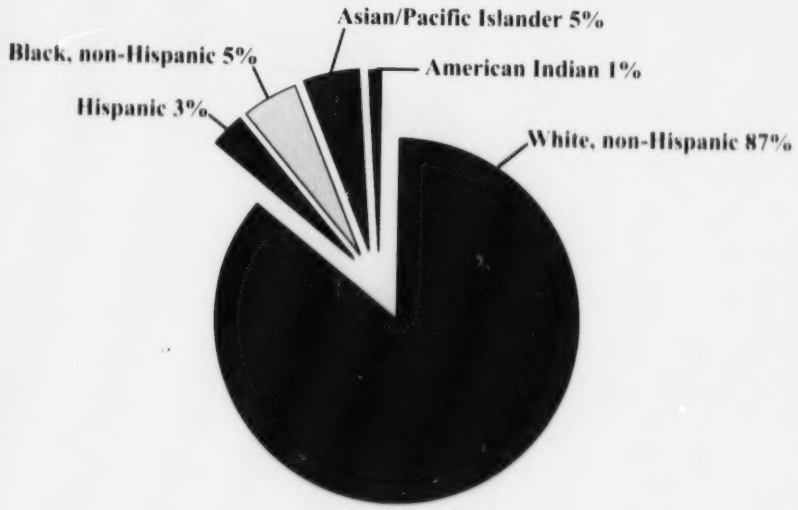
Increases in the U.S. Minority Population

Ethnic Group	Percentage Change 1980-90	1990 Total	Percentage Change 1990-2020	2020 Projected Total
Hispanic, of any race	+ 53.6	22,354,000	+110.0	47,000,000
African American	+ 13.2	29,986,000	+ 46.7	44,000,000
Asian/ Asian American	+107.8	7,274,000	+ 92.5	14,000,000
Native American	+ 37.9	1,959,000	+ 53.1	3,000,000

Source: Harold L. Hodgkinson, *A Demographic Look at Tomorrow*. Washington, D.C., Institute for Educational Leadership, 1992.

APPENDIX B

Racial and Ethnic Distribution of Faculty and Instructional Staff—Fall 1992

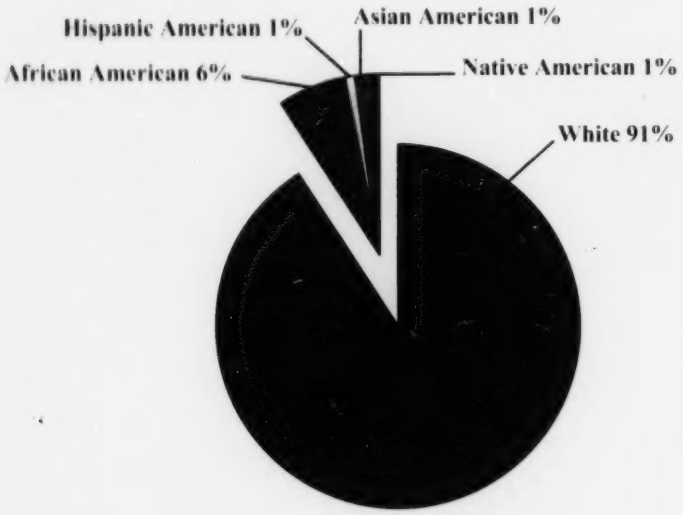


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty," "Faculty and Instructional Staff: Who Are They and What Do They Do?" survey report, published October 1994.

APPENDIX C

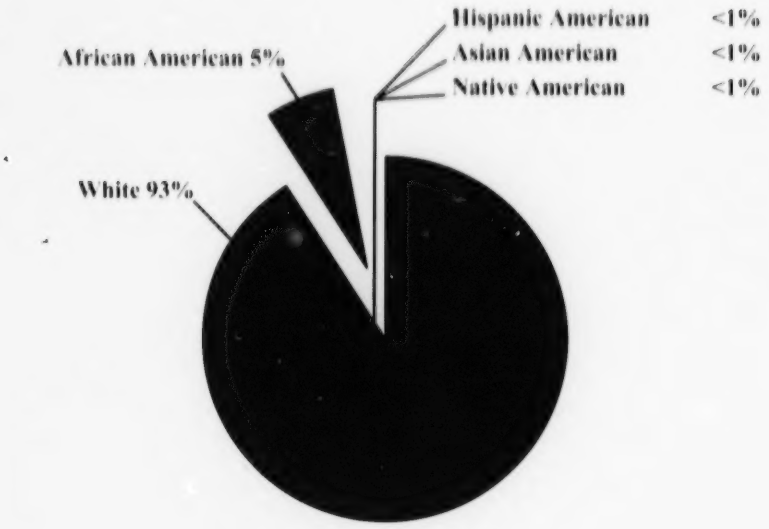
Ethnic/Racial Board Composition at Independent Colleges And Universities

1. Four-Year Independent Institutions
Source: 1991 AGB Survey of Governing Board Characteristics, Policies, Practices



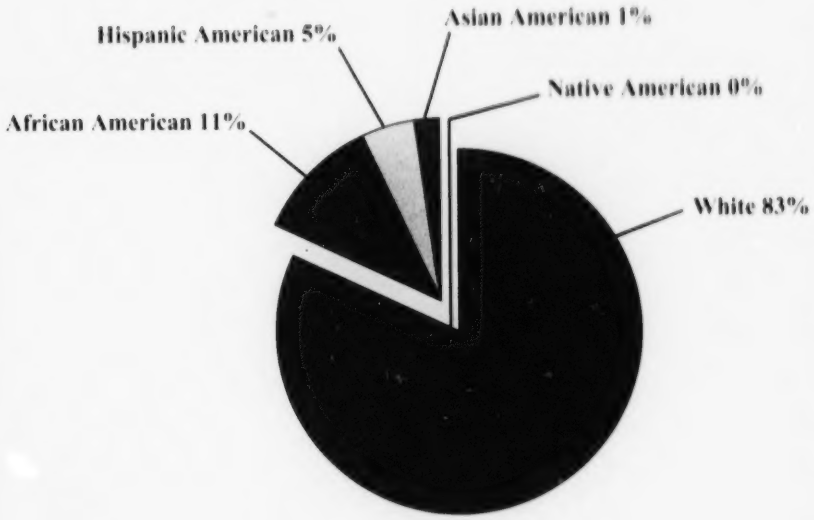
2. Two-Year Independent Institutions

Source: 1991 AGB Survey of Governing Board Characteristics, Policies, Practices



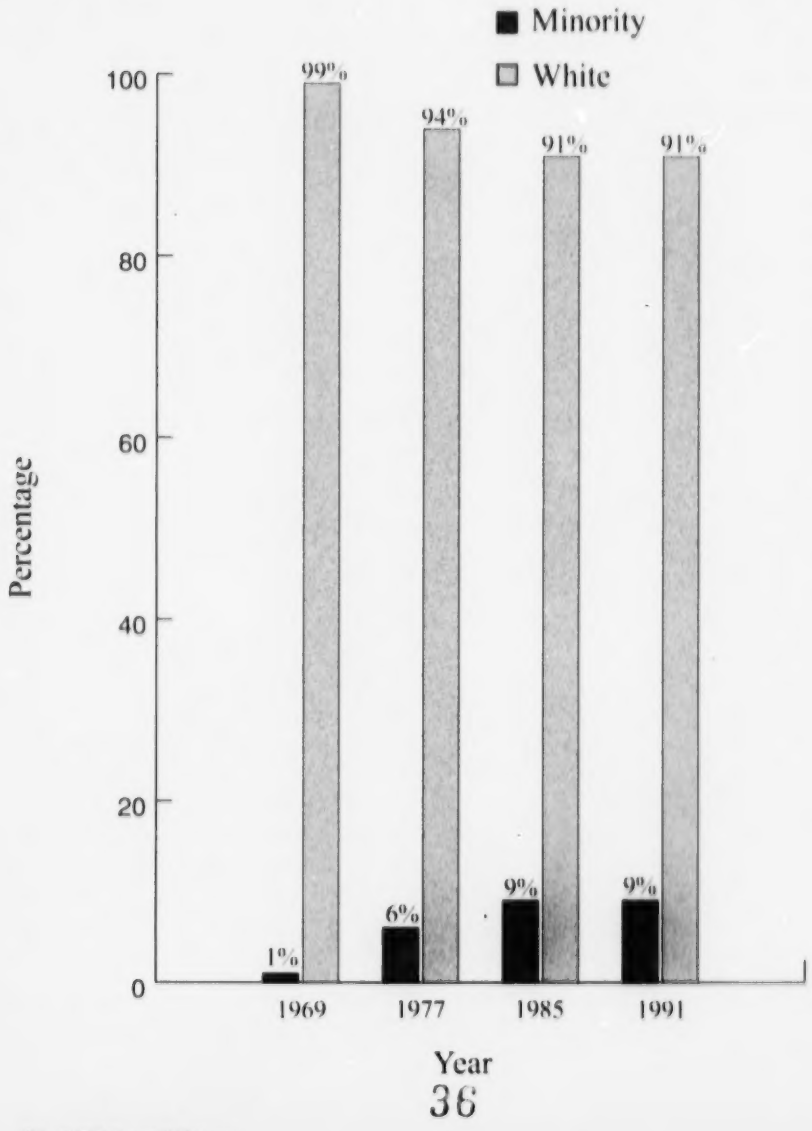
3. Theological Institutions

Source: 1991 AGB Survey of Governing Board Characteristics, Policies, Practices



4. Progression of Racial/Ethnic Background of Board Members at Independent Institutions 1969-1991

Source: 1991 AGB Survey of Governing Board Characteristics, Policies, Practices



APPENDIX D

Sample Board Profile Worksheet

Source: *Committee on Trustees*, Robert L. Gale, AGB Effective Committees Series

	Current profile 1996	Ideal profile 1997	Ideal profile 1998	Ideal profile 1999
Age				
70 and over				
60-79				
50-59				
49-49				
30-39				
Under 30				
Sex				
Female				
Male				
Race				
White				
African American				
Hispanic				
Asian/Asian American				
Native American				
Other				
Areas of Expertise				
Administration				
Agriculture				
Business				
Education				
Finance				
Fund-Raising				
Government				
Health/Medical				

Legal				
Marketing				
Physical Plant				
Public Relations				
Religion				
Technology				
Other				
Geographic Distribution				
New England				
Midatlantic				
Southeast				
Midwest				
Southwest				
Northwest				
West				
College Relationship				
Alumni				
Parents				
Other				
Financial Position				
Independent				
Salaried				
Other				
Length of Service				
Over 10 years				
5-10 years				
2-5 years				
one year or less				

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